

REMARKS

Applicants acknowledge receipt of the Office Action mailed August 16, 2011.

In the Office Action¹, the Examiner rejected claims 1-3, 5-12, 14-19, and 22 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Maeda et al.* ("*Maeda '487*") (U.S. Patent No. 6,785,487) in view of *Maeda et al.* ("*Maeda '627*") (U.S. Patent No. 6,567,627); and rejected claims 20 and 21 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Maeda '487* in view of *Maeda '627*, and further in view of *Funaki* (U.S. Patent No. 6,707,471).

No claim is amended herein. Upon entry of this response, claims 1-3, 5-12, and 14-22 will remain pending. Of these claims, claims 1 and 12 are independent.

Applicants traverse the rejections above and respectfully request reconsideration for at least the reasons that follow.

I. 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) REJECTIONS

Applicants traverse the rejection of claims 1-3, 5-12, 14-19, and 22 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Maeda '487* in view of *Maeda '627*.

Applicants respectfully disagree with the Examiner's arguments and conclusions and submit that independent claims 1 and 12 are patentably distinguishable over *Maeda '487* and *Maeda '627* at least for the reasons described below.

The key to supporting any rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103 is the clear articulation of the reason(s) why the claimed invention would have been obvious. See

¹ The Office Action contains characterizations of the claims and the related art with which Applicants do not necessarily agree. Unless expressly noted otherwise, Applicants decline to subscribe to any statement or characterization in the Office Action.

M.P.E.P. § 2142, 8th Ed., Rev. 7 (July 2008). Such an analysis should be made explicit and cannot be premised upon mere conclusory statements. See id. “A conclusion of obviousness requires that the reference(s) relied upon be enabling in that it put the public in possession of the claimed invention.” M.P.E.P. § 2145. Furthermore, “[t]he mere fact that references can be combined or modified does not render the resultant combination obvious unless the results would have been predictable to one of ordinary skill in the art” at the time the invention was made. M.P.E.P. § 2143.01(III), internal citation omitted. Moreover, “[i]n determining the differences between the prior art and the claims, the question under 35 U.S.C. § 103 is not whether the differences themselves would have been obvious, but whether the claimed invention as a whole would have been obvious.” M.P.E.P. § 2141.02(I), internal citations omitted (emphasis in original).

“[T]he framework for the objective analysis for determining obviousness under 35 U.S.C. 103 is stated in *Graham v. John Deere Co.*, 383 U.S. 1, 148 USPQ 459 (1966). . . . The factual inquiries . . . [include determining the scope and content of the prior art and] . . . [a]scertaining the differences between the claimed invention and the prior art.” M.P.E.P. § 2141(II). “Office personnel must explain why the difference(s) between the prior art and the claimed invention would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art.” M.P.E.P. § 2141(III).

Independent claim 1, and similarly independent claim 12, recites an image forming apparatus, comprising: “a display section for displaying an initial screen for performing function selection; a setting screen for receiving an input of setting an image forming condition for forming an image on a recording medium, . . . ; and a display

control section, wherein the setting screen includes a multi-function OK button for enabling the setting of the image forming condition inputted on the setting screen, the multi-function OK button being configured to perform at least two functions when the multi-function OK button receives an input from a user, the at least two functions including enabling the inputted setting of the image forming condition and creating and displaying a shortcut button on the initial screen for redisplaying the setting screen on which the image forming condition was set, and wherein when the multi-function OK button is clicked, the display control section sets the image forming condition *and* creates the shortcut button for calling the setting screen to set the image forming condition” (emphases added).

Maeda '487 appears to disclose an image forming device arranged such that desired functions and their respective setting details can be allocated to shortcut keys, and titles and icons representing the functions allocated to the shortcut keys can also be designated for the shortcut keys and displayed on the shortcut keys. Accordingly, when executing a function allocated to a shortcut key, the operator can select the desired function according to the indication on the shortcut key without having to refer to the operations manual or the like. (*Maeda '487*, Abstract).

As admitted by the Examiner, *Maeda '487*, however, fails to teach or suggest at least “the setting screen includes a multi[-]function OK button for enabling the setting of the image forming condition inputted on the setting screen, the multi-function OK button being configured to perform at least two functions when the multi-function OK button receives an input from a user, the at least two functions including enabling the inputted setting of the image forming condition and creating and displaying a shortcut button on

the initial screen for redisplaying the setting screen on which the image forming condition was set.” (*Office Action*, p. 3, ll. 1-7). The Examiner further admits that “Maeda (‘487) also does not explicitly disclose the image forming condition is for forming an image on a recording medium.” (*Id.* at p. 3, ll. 17-19). *Maeda* ‘487 also fails to disclose at least “a display control section, . . . wherein when the multi-function OK button is clicked, the display control section sets the image forming condition **and** creates the shortcut button for calling the setting screen to set the image forming condition” (emphases added), as recited in independent claim 1, and similarly independent claim 12.

In order to cure the deficiencies of *Maeda* ‘487, the Examiner relies on *Maeda* ‘627 and alleges “Maeda (‘627) discloses . . . [an] apparatus and method for an image forming condition displaying method that . . . discloses a ‘close’ key that completes the allocation of functions with the settings of function key being 2 in 1, left staple, and dotted line. These settings are confirmed with the creation of a 2 in 1 shortcut (K2) in Figure 16. The shortcut created is displayed on the initial screen. After selecting the 2 in 1 shortcut, the setting screen 62 is redisplayed.” (*Office Action*, p. 3, ll. 10-15). The Examiner further asserts that “Maeda (‘627) further discloses receiving an input of setting an input forming condition, wherein when a user allocates a setting of a magnification level to a function provides copying under the setting when the start button is operated. (*Id.* at p. 3, ll. 19-21). Such teachings, even if present in *Maeda* ‘627, however, do not constitute or suggest at least “a display control section, . . . wherein when the multi-function OK button is clicked, the display control section sets the image forming condition **and** creates the shortcut button for calling the setting

screen to set the image forming condition” (emphases added), as recited in independent claim 1, and similarly independent claim 12.

In *Maeda* '627, the image conditions are set or allocated by pressing respective “close keys,” which the Examiner equates to the claimed “OK button,” in completely different screens. For example, the image forming conditions are set by pressing close keys after selecting respective conditions, as disclosed by examples such as the magnification setting shown in FIG. 3, the consolidation setting shown in FIG. 4, and the sort setting shown in FIG. 5. Moreover, when allocating the setting to the shortcut key, as shown in FIG. 6, the shortcut key registration key must first be pressed for displaying another screen, then the close key is pressed in the other screen. Although *Maeda* '627 discloses that the setting of the image forming condition and the allocation to the shortcut keys are executed by pressing the close keys, the close keys are respectively displayed in completely different screens to respectively set the image forming conditions or allocate the settings. There is no coordination or tandem action between the setting of the image forming condition and the creation of the shortcut keys. The operations are essentially the same as being executed by pressing completely different keys.

In contrast, in the present invention, the image forming conditions are set by a simple operation of clicking the multi-function OK button displayed in a single screen of the setting screen. When the image forming condition is set and the multi-function OK button is clicked, the image forming condition becomes effective and the shortcut button for calling the setting screen to set the image forming condition is newly created by the display control section and is displayed by the same on the display section. That is,

only one click of the multi-function OK button enables the creation of the shortcut button as well as setting the image forming condition, support for which may be found, for example, by the OK button 45 in the screen illustrated in FIG. 3 of Applicants' drawings. Consequently, it is possible to effectively call the setting screen to set the image forming condition and perform the resetting of the image forming condition when the user wants to correct the already-set image forming condition or to set a new image forming condition.

As explained above, the elements of independent claims 1 and 12 are neither taught nor suggested by the cited references. Consequently, the Office Action has neither properly determined the scope and content of the prior art nor properly ascertained the differences between the prior art and the claims. Accordingly, no reason has been clearly articulated as to why the claims would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in view of the prior art. Therefore, a *prima facie* case of obviousness has not been established for independent claims 1 and 12. Claims 1 and 12, and claims 2, 3, 5-11, 14-19, and 22 which depend therefrom, are patentable over *Maeda '487* and *Maeda '627*. Applicants therefore request that the rejection of claims 1-3, 5-12, 14-19, and 22 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) be withdrawn.

Applicants traverse the rejection of claims 20 and 21 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Maeda '487* in view of *Maeda '627*, and further in view of *Funaki*. The deficiencies of *Maeda '487* and *Maeda '627* are discussed above.

With respect to *Funaki*, the Examiner alleges "Funaki discloses . . . [an] apparatus and method for an image forming condition displaying method that . . .

discloses a cancel button for specifying the cancellation of processing of entered data . . .” (*Office Action*, p. 11, para. 3). Such teaching, even if present in *Funaki*, however, does not constitute or suggest at least an image forming apparatus, comprising: “a display section for displaying an initial screen for performing function selection; a setting screen for receiving an input of setting an image forming condition for forming an image on a recording medium, . . . ; and a display control section, wherein the setting screen includes a multi-function OK button for enabling the setting of the image forming condition inputted on the setting screen, the multi-function OK button being configured to perform at least two functions when the multi-function OK button receives an input from a user, the at least two functions including enabling the inputted setting of the image forming condition and creating and displaying a shortcut button on the initial screen for redisplaying the setting screen on which the image forming condition was set, and wherein when the multi-function OK button is clicked, the display control section sets the image forming condition **and** creates the shortcut button for calling the setting screen to set the image forming condition” (emphases added), as recited in independent claim 1, and similarly independent claim 12.

Claims 20 and 21 correspondingly depend from independent claims 1 and 12 and require all elements thereof. As explained above, the elements of independent claims 1 and 12 are neither taught nor suggested by the cited references. Consequently, the Office Action has neither properly determined the scope and content of the prior art nor properly ascertained the differences between the prior art and the claims. Accordingly, no reason has been clearly articulated as to why the claims would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in view of the prior art and a *prima facie* case

of obviousness has not been established for claims 20 and 21 at least due to their dependence. Therefore, Applicants request that the rejection of claims 20 and 21 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) be withdrawn.

II. CONCLUSION

Applicants respectfully submit that claims 1-3, 5-12, and 14-22 are in condition for allowance.

In view of the foregoing, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and reexamination of this application and the timely allowance of the pending claims.

Please grant any extensions of time required to enter this response and charge any additional required fees to Deposit Account 06-0916.

Respectfully submitted,

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Dated: November 16, 2011

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